



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**MALAWI**

## ABE/LINK MALAWI TPDS MONTHLY BULLETIN

**JUNE 2010**

### FOCUS ON PARTNERSHIP WITH MOEST

The MTPDS exists to support the MoEST to implement its declared policy priorities in teacher professional development. It will work with and through the MoEST to provide technical support, build capacity and to achieve results across 6 areas:

- Result 1: Strengthened Teacher Policy, Support & Management Systems
- Result 2: Enhanced Teacher Performance
- Result 3: Improved Early Grade Literacy & Numeracy
- Result 4: Improved Early Grade Literacy & Numeracy for Out-of-School Children or Youth
- Result 5: Enhanced Quality of Primary Teaching & Learning Materials
- Result 6: Improved Teacher Education-NPC, M&E Systems & Quality

Each of these is critical to implementation of key policy statements such as the National Education Sector Plan (NESP), the Education Sector Investment Plan (ESIP) and National Strategy for Teacher Education and Development (NSTED). Through the work short-term Technical Assistants, Joe DeStefano and David Chapman, TPDS has begun the process of consultation with MoEST to identify and prioritize policy imperatives that require support.

During the month of June several important meetings have taken place between MTPDS and senior MoEST personnel to further develop close working relations.

- On 25<sup>th</sup> June the COP and COTR met with Bernard Sandi, (*Secretary Education, Science and Technology (SEST)*). Among the items discussed were: (i) The SEST's vision for MTPDS and its role in implementing MoEST policy, (ii) Identification of MoEST counterparts who will participate in steering the project to maximize its relevance to MoEST priorities. (iii) Proposals for giving the MTPDS a Chichewa name which can assist in popularizing it with beneficiaries and stakeholders.
- On 22<sup>nd</sup> June the COP and ACOTR met Raphael Agabu (*Acting Director of EMAS*). Among the items discussed: (i) An overview of MoEST structure as relevant to MTPDS. (ii) The need to shift focus from policy development to policy implementation, (iii) The MoEST's view that MTPDS should be treated as a 'program and not a project' – working to 'embed, stabilize and routines' implementation of the new primary curriculum
- On 29<sup>th</sup> June the COP met with Dr. William Susweze Banda (*Director of the MIE*). Among the items discussed: (i) Recent experience in the provision of CPD in support of PCAR implementation and the need to develop cost-effective, school-based strategies, (ii) The urgent requirement to review PCAR learning materials and improve the availability of reading materials at school level.
- On 29<sup>th</sup> June the COP and ACOTR participated in the Basic Education Technical Working Group chaired by McKnight Kalanda. (*Director of Basic Education*). Among the items discussed were: (i) Presentation and costing of plans to roll out School Improvement Grants (SIGs) linked to School Improvement Plans (SIPs) nationwide. (ii) Prioritization of the task of reviewing and distribution of PCAR text books. This move may have the effect of accelerating intervention under Result 5.

Further meetings are planned in early July with the Directors of the directorates of DTED, Basic Education and Planning. All meetings so far have demonstrated the high level of interest and support for the project within the MoEST and the need to rapidly move MTPDS beyond the start up phase and into implementation phase. Critical to this move will be the design and drafting, during the month of July of an 18 month work-plan for the period beginning August 2010. MoEST participation in the development of this plan will be of the utmost importance.

# MTPDS Monthly Bulletin June 2010

## NEW CHIEF OF PARTY ASSUMES DUTIES

Dr. Stephen Harvey assumed duties as Chief of Party (COP) on 3<sup>rd</sup> July. He has extensive experience in the management of large scale education projects in South Africa and Uganda, where he was stationed within the Education Standards Agency for four years. He has a PhD in Education focusing on teacher development. He has previously worked in Malawi as Regional Program Director for Link Community Development, overseeing their projects in Dedza and Mulanje Districts. Steve feels privileged to have this opportunity to contribute to enhancing the quality of education in Malawi. A series of open and productive meetings soon after arrival has ensured that a close working relationship has been quickly established key technical staff at the Mission, MoEST and other development partners.

## COORDINATION WITH OTHER DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

USAID supports the Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) for donor support to education in Malawi. As such a focus of the COPs first weeks has been establish relations with other donors and projects and to identify potential synergies. Highest priority has been accorded to synchronization with other USAID projects.

- On 18<sup>th</sup> June the COP met with Joan Owomoyela of the Education Decentralization Support Activity (EDSA). There is clearly room for collaboration on (i) the review and integration of EMIS and TEMIS systems (ii) and the implementation of zonal grants.
- On 23<sup>rd</sup> June the COP met with Augustine Kamlongera (COP), Simon Richmond and Jennifer Kennedy of the Tikwere Project to explore the coordination of work on Open and Distance Learning (ODL), Continuous Professional Development (CPD), PCAR materials development, Early Literacy Teaching and Complementary Basic Education (CBE). There is a comprehensive overlap of interest between the two projects that will necessitate continuous coordination.
- Meetings were also held with Misty Sailors of Read Malawi, during the USAID conference in Dar es Salaam on the coordination of approaches to materials development and Literacy CPD and the implementation of EGRA under Result 3. .

---

2

Meetings were also held with other international donors and organizations.

- Meeting with McPherson Jere of CIDA on 21<sup>st</sup> June revealed that while CIDA's program has scaled down recently, their current focus is clearly upon Initial Primary Teacher Education. In particular there will be common interest in developing methods for the mentoring of ODL students.
- Meeting with Panji Chamdimba of UNICEF on 21<sup>st</sup> June revealed a common interest in pupil assessment while reiterating the common interest in CBE.
- Meeting with Don Taylor of DFID on 22<sup>nd</sup> provided a good overview of recent DFID funded activities and a common interest in the review of PCAR materials and in any aspect of TPDS that promotes community accountability in education. .

## THE USAID ANNUAL REGIONAL EDUCATION WORKSHOP

The COP represented MTPDS at the *USAID Annual Regional Education Workshop* held in Dar es Salaam from 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July. The conference's theme "*Quality Education for All: Forging a New Agenda*" was highly relevant to the objectives of MTPDS. There were numerous opportunities to share experience and innovations from across the African continent in relevant fields such: teacher professional development, applications of innovative technology in education, strategies for enhancing early literacy performance and provision of textbooks and learning materials. The use of management information systems in Liberia to improve teacher deployment and eliminate 'ghost teachers' from the payroll and an impassioned presentation from a Ugandan head teacher on his efforts to promote a reading culture were but two examples. The Malawi delegation was composed of representatives of the MoEST, USAID, and implementing partners such as MTPDS. There was a rich array of parallel sessions to choose from. The cohesiveness of this team and the value of the input were illustrated by rich discussions that took place

# MTPDS Monthly Bulletin June 2010

within the Malawian delegation in their daily debriefing meetings through which inputs were shared and their potential and relevance to the Malawian context was discussed.

## PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING WORKSHOP

During the week starting Monday 28<sup>th</sup> June ODL advisor McLloyd Polepole participated in the National workshop on Open and Distance Learning Policy from which it is anticipated that a comprehensive policy statement will be generated. This provided a timely opportunity for MTPDS to input findings from initial investigative work conducted by MTPDS consultant Greville Rumble.

## MOEST DIRECTORS APPROVE DECENTRALISED CPD NATIONWIDE

On 2nd June member of the MTPDS team convened a CPD strategy meeting attended by members of EMAS, DTED, Basic Education, MIE, USAID, and Tikwere, during which several agreements were made:

- The MTPDS CPD model was approved as fully compatible with the national framework of CPD.
- MoEST accepted MTPDS's focus on literacy, numeracy and academic life skills
- MoEST asked for project activities to be expedited to make full use of the project's lifespan.
- It was also agreed that printing and distribution of technical manuals precede initiation of CPD

## PLANS FOR A NATIONAL LITERACY FORUM DEVELOPED (July 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>)

During June the TA Karen Wiener has been working on a review of previous literacy interventions in the Malawi. This will culminate in a National Literacy Forum to be held in Lilongwe on July 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. At this event representatives of both the MoEST and NGOs will present approaches to literacy promotion in Malawi, past and present. The aim will be to identify best practice strategies and develop recommendation on how these are to be promoted through MTPDS and other interventions in the future.

## RECRUITMENT AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

There has been a continued emphasis during throughout June on assembling the multi-skilled team required to meet the complex challenges presented by MTPDS. During the month of June:

- Dr. Steve Shara began work on June 1<sup>st</sup> as Teacher Training Specialist (Northern Region) working with Seward on Result area 2.
- Sydonio Matope started work on June 1<sup>st</sup> as Teacher Training Coordinator. It is anticipated that he will play a leading role in establishing and managing offices at divisional level in order to ensure that the project has national presence and reach across all result areas.
- Maria Kachila started work as Communications Officer on 1<sup>st</sup> July
- Arrangements were concluded for the recruitment of Charles Gunsaru to the position of Senior Policy Advisor. He will start on July 1<sup>st</sup> and is highly esteemed by MoEST partners having worked in several senior positions including Director of MIE.
- Preparations were made for Nick Shawa to join the team as from 1<sup>st</sup> July as M&E Advisor. His expertise and experience will greatly enhance MTPDS capacity to lead Result Area 6.
- Interviews took place for the post of Early Grade Reading Assessment Coordinator. We are in the process of negotiating terms with a preferred candidate.
- Telephone interviews took place on June 30<sup>th</sup> for the position of Finance and Administration Manager. Second interviews and a practical test will be set for shortlisted candidates early in July.

Proper implementation of the 3-6 month work-plan requires that the team be brought to full strength as soon as possible. Until such time maximum use will be made of the existing team and of short-term TA in order to initiate activities.

# MTPDS Monthly Bulletin June 2010

## PROCUREMENT AND OFFICE

- After overcoming numerous bureaucratic hurdles, the procurement of 2 Toyota Hilux double cab pickup trucks is nearing completion
- IT consultant, Bobby Cherian visited during the last week of June and installed the server and local area network, as well as performing several other IT trouble shooting functions and providing a clear list of procedures to be followed with regard to maintenance of computer equipment.
- Power cuts have been a regular occurrence during this month. We are in the final stages of assembling a proposal for purchase of an inverter with capacity to run computers and other equipment for up to 6 hours. .